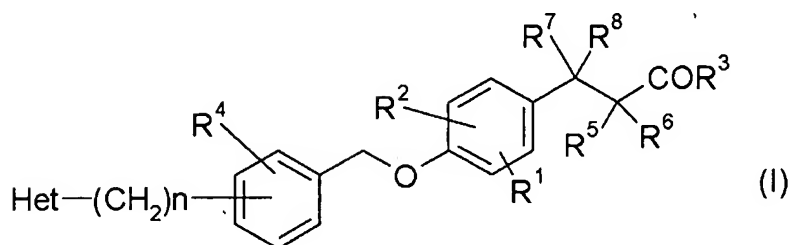


## Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently amended) A compound represented by the formula:



wherein Het is an optionally substituted heterocyclic group,

$n$  is 0 or 1,

$R^1$  and  $R^2$  are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, a  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl group or a halogen atom,

$R^3$  is an optionally substituted hydroxy group or an optionally substituted amino group,

$R^4$  is a hydrogen atom, ~~an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group,~~ an optionally substituted  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl group, an optionally substituted  $C_{2-6}$  alkenyl group, an optionally substituted  $C_{2-6}$  alkynyl group, an optionally substituted  $C_{3-8}$  cycloalkyl group, an optionally substituted  $C_{6-14}$  aryl group, an optionally substituted  $C_{7-16}$  aralkyl group, an optionally substituted hydroxy group or an optionally substituted amino group,

$R^5$  and  $R^6$  are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, a  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl group or a halogen atom, and

$R^7$  and  $R^8$  are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom, a  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl group, a halogen atom or an optionally substituted hydroxy group,

or a salt thereof (except

4-[[3-(2-pyrazinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,

methyl 4-[[3-(2-pyrazinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,

methyl 4-[[3-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridinyl]phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,

4-[[3-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-pyridinyl]phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,

4-[[3-(2-thiazolyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,

methyl 4-[[3-(2-thiazolyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,

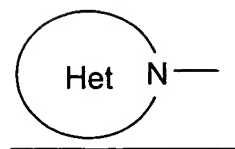
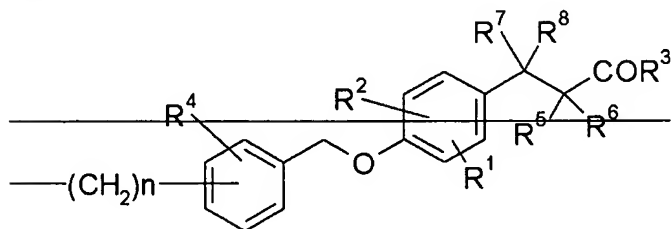
4-[[3-(1H-pyrrol-1-yl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,

methyl 4-[[3-(1H-pyrrol-1-yl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,

4-[[3-(3-furyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,  
 methyl 4-[[3-(3-furyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,  
 4-[[3-(5-pyrimidinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,  
 4-[[3-(2-pyridinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,  
 methyl 4-[[3-(2-pyridinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,  
 4-[[3-(2-pyrimidinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,  
 methyl 4-[[3-(2-pyrimidinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,  
 4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,  
 methyl 4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,  
 4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid and  
 methyl 4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate).

## 2. (Cancelled)

**3. (Currently amended)** A compound of claim 1, wherein ~~the heterocyclic group represented by Het is a heterocyclic group containing at least one nitrogen atom as a ring-constituting atom and the nitrogen atom is bonded to a group represented by the following formula:~~



wherein each symbol Het is as defined in claim 1, which is optionally substituted.

**4. (Original)** A compound of claim 1, wherein R<sup>3</sup> is a hydroxy group.

5. (Original) A compound of claim 1, wherein n is 1.

6. (Original) A compound of claim 1, wherein R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom or a halogen atom.

7. (Original) A compound of claim 1, wherein R<sup>4</sup> is a hydrogen atom or a C<sub>1-6</sub> alkoxy group.

8. (Original) A compound of claim 1, wherein R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> are hydrogen atoms.

9. (Original) A compound of claim 1, wherein R<sup>7</sup> and R<sup>8</sup> are hydrogen atoms.

10. (Original) A compound of claim 1, which is 3-(4-{[3-(1-benzothiophen-3-yl)benzyl]oxy}phenyl)propanoic acid;

3-(4-{[3-(2-methyl-3,4-dihydroquinolin-1(2H)-yl)benzyl]oxy}phenyl)propanoic acid;

3-[4-({4-[(2-phenyl-1H-indol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl}oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

3-[2-fluoro-4-({4-[(2-phenyl-1H-indol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl}oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

3-[4-({4-[(2,5-diphenyl-1H-pyrrol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl}oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

3-(4-{[4-({5-(2-phenylethyl)-3-[4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1H-pyrazol-1-yl}methyl)benzyl]oxy}phenyl)propanoic acid;

3-[4-({4-[(3,5-diphenyl-1H-pyrazol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl}oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

3-{4-[(4-{[3-tert-butyl-5-(phenoxyethyl)-1H-pyrazol-1-yl]methyl}benzyl)oxy]-2-fluorophenyl}propanoic acid;

3-{4-[(4-{[5-(benzyloxy)-3-tert-butyl-1H-pyrazol-1-yl]methyl}benzyl)oxy]-2-fluorophenyl}propanoic acid;

3-(4-{[4-({3-tert-butyl-5-[(6-methylpyridin-2-yl)methoxy]-1H-pyrazol-1-yl}methyl)benzyl]oxy}-2-fluorophenyl)propanoic acid or a salt thereof.

11. (Currently amended) A GPR40 receptor function modulator comprising a compound of claim 1 or a prodrug thereof.

**12. (Cancelled)**

**13. (Currently amended)** A pharmaceutical agent comprising a compound of claim 1 ~~or a prodrug thereof~~ together with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

**14-17. (Cancelled)**

**18. (Currently amended)** A method of modulating a GPR40 receptor function in a mammal, which comprises administering an effective amount of a compound of claim 1 ~~or a prodrug thereof~~ to the mammal.

**19. (Currently amended)** A method of promoting insulin secretion in a mammal, which comprises administering an effective amount of a compound of claim 1 ~~or a prodrug thereof~~ to the mammal.

**20. (Currently amended)** A method for the prophylaxis or treatment of diabetes in a mammal, which comprises administering an effective amount of a compound of claim 1 ~~or a prodrug thereof~~ to the mammal.